



CONTACT: Johan Zaayman  
713-624-0248  
[jzaayman@galvbay.org](mailto:jzaayman@galvbay.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Over 1,700 Acres of Coastal Habitat to be Protected in Chambers County, TX**

*Galveston Bay Foundation Purchases Conservation Easement to Safeguard Natural Habitat*

**Webster, TX – December 1, 2015** – More than 1,700 acres of coastal wetland and prairie habitat near Smith Point in Chambers County, TX will remain in its natural state due to conservation efforts led by the Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF). GBF has purchased a conservation easement on a property called Gordy Marsh from a local landowner.

A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement between a landowner and a land trust like GBF, where a landowner agrees to limit future development or any land use that may harm wildlife or water quality in exchange for compensation.

The acquisition was made possible with the financial support of several individuals and organizations. The latter includes The Knobloch Family Foundation, The Jamail Galveston Foundation, The Brown Foundation Inc. of Houston, The Trull Foundation and The Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation. Additional support was provided by the Galveston Bay Estuary Program, bridge financing from The Conservation Fund and a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

“Permanently protecting this tract of land will ensure that critical resources will remain for migratory waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds as well as provide essential habitat for coastal fisheries including fish, crabs, shrimp and oysters,” said Bob Stokes, President of GBF.

“It feels good knowing that I am a part of conserving some of the best coastal habitat in the State of Texas,” said Cecil W. Parker Jr., landowner of Gordy Marsh. “I want to make sure my descendants are able to enjoy the beauty and serenity this land possesses.”

Approximately \$900,000 was raised to acquire the Gordy Marsh easement, which borders Trinity Bay. The easement is located within an area rated as a high conservation priority by the Chambers County Greenprint and the Galveston Bay Habitat Conservation Blueprint. Natural habitats found onsite include salt, brackish, and freshwater marshes and coastal tallgrass prairie.

Since its establishment in 1987, GBF has conserved more than 7,600 acres of coastal habitat through property acquisitions and conservation easements and is working to substantially increase acreage conserved in the coming years. Conserving land helps ensure clean air and drinking water, food security, scenic landscapes and views, recreational places, and habitat for the diversity of life on earth.

### **About Galveston Bay Foundation**

The mission of the Galveston Bay Foundation is to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources of the Galveston Bay estuarine system and its tributaries for present users and for posterity. The Foundation was incorporated in 1987, and is a non-profit organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. GBF is located at 17330 Highway 3 in Webster, Texas. For further information contact GBF at 281-332-3381 or visit the website at [www.galvbay.org](http://www.galvbay.org).

### **About Galveston Bay Estuary Program**

The mission of the Galveston Bay Estuary Program is to preserve Galveston Bay for generations to come. As a non-regulatory program administered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, it is charged with implementing The Galveston Bay Plan — a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan for Galveston Bay.

### **About The Conservation Fund**

At the Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states to protect more than 7.5 million acres of land since 1985.

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### **Photos and Map of Gordy Marsh**





